



Department of Defense DIRECTIVE

NUMBER 5107.2

November 9, 2000

DA&M

SUBJECT: Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Gulf War Illness, Medical Readiness, and Military Deployments

References: (a) Title 10, United States Code

(b) Presidential Review Directive-5 (NSTC/PRD-5), "A National Obligation: Planning for the Health Preparedness for and the Readjustment of Military, Veterans, and their Families after Future Deployments," August 1998, Executive Office of the President, Office of Science and Technology, Washington, D.C.

(c) [DoD Directive 8910.1](#), "Management and Control of Information Requirements," June 11, 1993

1. PURPOSE

Pursuant to the authorities provided in reference (a) and consistent with Presidential Review Directive 5 (reference (b)), this Directive establishes the position of Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Gulf War Illnesses, Medical Readiness, and Military Deployments with the responsibilities, functions, relationships, and authorities, as prescribed herein.

2. APPLICABILITY

This Directive applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the Department of Defense (hereafter referred to collectively as "the DoD Components").

3. POLICY

It is DoD policy to:

3.1. Do everything possible to investigate the events that occurred during deployments and on the battlefield, and to account as fully as possible for those events in order to understand and explain their impact on the health of Service members and civilian personnel.

3.2. Ensure that lessons learned from military deployments are institutionalized in military doctrine, organizations, training, materiel, policies, procedures, and future issues in order to achieve optimal levels of health protection and readiness for our Service members.

3.3. Stay connected to Service members, civilian personnel, veterans and Military Service organizations, veterans, their families, and the public through outreach aimed at responding to their concerns about, and assuring and preserving their trust in, the force health-related information and activities associated with past and potential military deployments.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES AND FUNCTIONS

4.1. The Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Gulf War Illnesses, Medical Readiness, and Military Deployments shall serve as the principal staff advisor to the Secretary of Defense on deployment matters as they pertain to force health in the Department of Defense, including aspects of doctrine, policy, readiness, and medical research. In the execution of his advisory responsibilities, and as determined by the Secretary of Defense, the Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Gulf War Illnesses, Medical Readiness, and Military Deployments shall:

4.1.1. Review the findings of investigations, inspections, and exercises related to the force-health aspects of military deployment activities conducted by the DoD Components. Where appropriate, address the concerns and issues from their findings and submit recommendations for corrective actions to the Secretary of Defense.

4.1.2. Collect, analyze, and assess information concerning the force health of military deployments from Service members, veterans, and the DoD Components.

Publish, as appropriate, case narratives, information papers, and environmental exposure reports related to the same.

4.1.3. Develop and maintain an automated information system and database that supports the investigation, information exchange, reporting, and archiving of pertinent force health-related information on past, present, or potential military deployments.

4.1.4. Maintain the capability to respond rapidly to, and estimate and report the impact of, urgent deployment related issues tasked by the Secretary, and/or raised by the Military and Veterans Health Coordinating Board (MVHCB) and its working groups.

4.1.5. Establish, conduct, and maintain ongoing liaison and dialogue with the deployment-related and lessons-learned staffs of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Intelligence Community, and the Military Departments, consistent with the deployment activities prescribed within his area of cognizance.

4.1.6. Review and monitor implementation of OSD and Joint Staff health-related deployment and readiness plans, policies, and programs, such as Joint Medical Surveillance and Force Health Protection, to identify opportunities to improve force-health protection of Service members and civilian personnel in order to report to the Secretary of Defense on potential force-health issues.

4.1.7. Sponsor DoD advisory groups, studies, and analyses to examine, evaluate, and report to the Secretary on selected deployment force-health issues.

4.1.8. In coordination with the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs), the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs), the MVHCB, and other Agencies, conduct risk communication initiatives to respond individually and collectively to Service members, veterans, and the public on concerns regarding potential deployment force health-related issues. Initiatives shall be coordinated with the DoD Components, as appropriate, and may include, but are not limited to:

4.1.8.1. Proactively representing DoD positions on behalf of Service members and veterans.

4.1.8.2. Conducting outreach visits to Service members, veterans, and other groups to respond to force-health deployment issues.

4.1.8.3. Establishing and maintaining interactive communication technologies to ensure the free flow of information and concerns between Service members and veterans and the Department's senior leadership.

4.1.9. Serve as the Secretary of Defense representative to the MVHCB and communicate with veterans and Military Service organizations on force health-related deployment issues.

4.1.10. Perform other duties as assigned by the Secretary of Defense.

5. RELATIONSHIPS

5.1. In the performance of assigned functions and responsibilities, the Special Assistant shall:

5.1.1. Report directly to the Secretary of Defense.

5.1.2. Coordinate and exchange information with other OSD officials, Heads of the DoD Components, and other Federal officials having collateral or related functions.

5.1.3. Promote coordination, cooperation, and mutual understanding concerning deployment matters as they relate to force-health and medical readiness activities and issues within the Department of Defense, other Executive Departments and Agencies, the Congress, veterans and Military Service organizations, and the public.

5.1.4. Use existing facilities and services of the Department of Defense and other Federal Agencies, whenever practicable, to avoid duplication and to achieve an appropriate balance among modernization, readiness, sustainability, efficiency, and economy.

5.2. Other OSD officials and Heads of the DoD Components shall coordinate with the Special Assistant on all matters related to the responsibilities and functions cited in section 4., above.

5.3. Nothing herein shall be interpreted to interpose the Special Assistant in the policymaking, oversight, and execution of deployment activities or medical research, which are and remain the responsibility of the cognizant OSD Principal Staff

Assistants, the Secretaries of the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Commanders of the Combatant Commands, that are prescribed by law or regulation.

6. AUTHORITIES

The Special Assistant is hereby delegated authority to:

6.1. Obtain reports, information, advice, and assistance consistent with DoD Directive 8910.1 (reference (c)), as necessary, in carrying out assigned functions.

6.2. Communicate directly with Heads of the DoD Components.
Communications to the Commanders of the Combatant Commands shall be transmitted through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

6.3. Communicate with other Government officials, representatives of the Legislative Branch, members of veterans and Military Service organizations, members of the public, and representatives of foreign governments, as appropriate, in carrying out assigned functions.

7. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Directive is effective immediately.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rudy de Leon'.

Rudy de Leon
Deputy Secretary of Defense